



# Impaired Driving Prevention Month

## Message for Commanding Officers

December brings with it many opportunities for Sailors and Marines to engage in alcohol use and celebration. In the United States, approximately 28 people die per day in crashes that involve alcohol-impaired drivers.<sup>1</sup> Even at levels below the legal limit, alcohol can seriously impair judgment and coordination as well as slow reaction time. Drugged driving is also becoming a serious issue because drugs, even when prescribed by a medical provider, can have similar negative effects to alcohol such as impaired judgment, perception, and motor skills. Approximately 16% of motor vehicle crashes involve drugs (legal and illegal) other than alcohol.<sup>2</sup>

During Impaired Driving Prevention Month, work with health promotion coordinators and your Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor (DAPA) to share resources that increase awareness and prevent impaired driving. Doing so can help your Sailors, Marines, and DoD civilians navigate the roads more safely this holiday season. Access the tools and resources by clicking on the blue, underlined hyperlinked text throughout the document.

## What Can Leadership Do?

**As a Commanding Officer, you play an important role in encouraging safe drinking habits and preventing impaired driving among your Sailors and/or Marines:**

- Reference the [Activity Ideas](#) to clear up misconceptions about how alcohol affects the body and provide tips on how to safely participate in holiday activities that may involve drinking.
- Hang the [Don't Get Wrecked](#) infographic at your command to show Sailors and Marines how impaired driving can negatively impact their lives.
- Emphasize personal responsibility at all command events where alcohol is available; ensure adequate quantities of non-alcoholic beverages are provided and easily accessible.
- Create a command culture that is intolerant of underage and irresponsible drinking behavior by deglamorizing alcohol use.
- Educate on the proper use of prescription medication by using the [Prescription for Discharge materials](#); medication can cause impaired driving too.



## You can work with Health Promotion Coordinators and your DAPA to:

- Educate your command about [what counts as a drink](#), so they can figure out if they are drinking too many servings.
- Encourage your command to [celebrate safely this holiday season](#) by drinking responsibly and establishing a safe transportation plan before arriving to a party.
- Let your command know the truth behind some of the [common risks surrounding alcohol use](#).
- Teach your Sailors and Marines how to [manage their drinking habits and build positive coping skills](#).
- Make sure your command knows about the [dangers of prescription drug abuse and misuse](#).
- Inform your command about the [dangers of drugged driving](#).
- Help your Sailors and Marines [understand when they've had enough](#) so they can avoid alcohol incidents that have serious consequences for their career.
- Share the Navy's [Keep What You've Earned Campaign](#) with Sailors to help them understand the negative effects of drinking, as well as drinking and driving, and how to engage in healthier behaviors.
- Encourage your Sailors and Marines to take the ["That Guy" quiz](#) to see if his or her drinking is affecting his or her reputation.
- Let your command know about the [blood alcohol concentration \(BAC\) and alcohol impairment](#).
- Educate your command about the [effects of mixing alcohol with medicine](#).

## References

- 1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Injury Prevention and Control: Motor Vehicle Safety. [http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/Impaired\\_Driving/](http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/Impaired_Driving/). Updated 7 September 2016.
- 2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Impaired Driving: Get the Facts. [Get the Facts. http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired\\_driving/impaired-driv\\_factsheet.html](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired_driving/impaired-driv_factsheet.html). Updated 15 April 2016.